measures have been taken to prevent the diversion/black marketing of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes:—

(i) Under the LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 the diversion/black marketing of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes by the distributors of OMCs is prohibited. The State Governments are empowered to take action against erring distributors under the provisions of this Order.

(ii) State Governments are alerted from time to time to crack down the diversion of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.

(iii) As per the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) for LPG distributors, in case of establishment of any diversion/black marketing of domestic LPG cylinder for commercial purposes, the following action is take against the distributor:

(a) Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.

(b) Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence, and

(c) Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

(iv) The officials of OMCs carry out random checks at distributor's godown, delivery point as well as enroute to ensure that no diversion/black marketing takes place. Action against the erring distributor is taken in terms of MDG/or Distributorship Agreement.

Participation in Qatar—Pakistan Pipeline Project

†687. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the latest position of Iran—India Gas pipe line scheme;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to move back from this scheme;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government are considering to become a part of Qatar-Pakistan Gas pipe line Scheme; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The Government is discussing the details of the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline Project with the Governments of Iran and Pakistan. Two separate, Secretary-level Joint Working Groups (JWGs), viz., India—Pakistan JWG and India—Iran Special JWG (SJWG) have been constituted for this purpose. So far, two meetings each of India—Pakistan JWG and the India—Iran SJWG have been held. The third set of metings is scheduled for December, 2005. Various technical, commercial, financial, legal and related issues have been discussed in these meetings and reviewed by the Indian and Iranian Ministers at their meeting in Riyadh on 19th November on the sidelines of the International Energy Forum Round Table Conference. The Pakistan Minister is scheduled to visit India after the next meeting of the India-Pakistan JWG. It is envisaged that the project structure and framework agreement for the project could be finalized by early next year.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) During the meeting between the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Panchayati Raj and the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources of Pakistan, in Islamabad, on 5th-7th June 2005, the Pakistani side *inter-alia* outlined the parameters of the proposed Gulf-South Asia (GUSA) gas pipeline project from Qatar to the coast of Pakistan. During the first meeting of the India-Pakistan JWG in New Delhi, on 12th-13th July, 2005, the Pakistani side briefed the Indian side on their discussions on the project with Qatari organizations. India has conveyed to Qatar its interest in being kept informed about developments relating to the project with a veiw to eventually participating in the project. In the second meeting of the India-Pakistan JWG in Islamabad, on 8th-9th September, 2005, the Pakistani side informed that the next Technical Working Committee meeting would discuss the project with reference to gas availability and its allocation for the project, including the possibility of India joining the project. The

project is at present at a preliminary stage. During the recent visit of Minister (P&NG) to Qatar on 21st November, 2005, he briefly discussed with the Minister of Energy & Industry of Qatar the possibilities of this project taking off in the near future. The Qatari Minister did not appear very hopeful, citing technological problems and the non-availability of gas for the project as the reasons.,

Promotion of Natural Gas with Germany's Assistance

†688. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to take assistance from Germany to promote natural gas in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government. However, a German company, M/s PLE Pipeline Engineering GmbH, has completed the detailed feasibility report (DFR), environment management plan (EMP) and Rapid Risk Analysis (RRA) for the Kakinada-Haldia natural gas pipeline of GAIL. Another German company, M/s Dorsch, is doing DFR, EMP and RRA for GAIL's Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline.

Discrimination against SC/ST Employees

689. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR:
SHRI DHARAMPAL SABHARWAL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that different rules and policies are being followed by all the three wings of Indian Oil Corporation i.e Marketing, Pipeline and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.